**Evaluation**

**United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2010-2015)**

**Republic of Armenia**

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**Acronyms**

CPAP Country Programme Action Plan

GDP Gross Domestic Product

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MDGs Millennium Development Goals

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

NSS National Statistical Service

RA Republic of Armenia

RCO Resident Coordinator’s Office

UNCT United Nations Country Team

UNDAF United Nations Development Assistance Framework

**UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes**

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization

ILO International Labour Organization

IOM International Organization for Migration

OCHA Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OHCHR Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

UNAIDS United Nations Joint Programme on AIDS

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNFPA United Nations Fund for Population Activities

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNHCR United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UNICEF United Nations Children’s Education Fund

UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization

WFP World Food Programme

WHO World Health Organization

DPI UN Department of Public Information

DSS UN Department for Safety and Security

# Executive Summary

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2010-2015 is relevant to national priorities and was designed in close cooperation with relevant government institutions. The selection of its priority areas was in line with national priorities and they reflect the mandates, capacities and comparative advantages of the agencies participating in the UNDAF. The **preparation** of the UNDAF appears to have been conducted thoroughly and with great detail.

Projects implemented under the UNDAF have been developed by individual agencies and implemented as such. Although joint programming at the planning stage laid the basis for the UN Country Team’s coherence, the implementation continued through individual agency’s work with sporadic coordination centered around the UNDAF Working Groups, particularly in the past two years.

The **design** of UNDAF has followed the logical steps of analysis and prioritization, closely liaising with the Government in order to assure concordance with the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Sustainable Development Program and Millennium Development Goals (MDG) strategies. The UNDAF that emerged identified the issues to be tackled and identified the relevant outputs, outcomes and expected impacts.

The UNDAF document had limited significance in UN agencies’ planning process and was more of a reflection of agencies general programme direction and project interest rather than a strategic document fulfilling a guidance role.

Monitoring and evaluation are crucial for the achievement of the UNDAF objectives as they enable the UN Country Team (UNCT) to measure performance as well as progress toward the achievement of results. The monitoring of the UNDAF implementation has been sporadic and implemented mainly through individual agency’s work.

The UNDAF preparation process was labor-intensive and required devoted human and other resources. The planning process overlaps with the final implementation period of the previous UNDAF, which leads to overburdened staff and inability to adequately respond to the requirements of the M&E calendar.

UNDAF Outcome Working Groups were established to follow its implementation process and engage in monitoring and evaluation. These workings groups met twice a year in 2011-2012, then annually and even more sporadically in the following years. High levels of staff fluctuation contributed to loss of impetus and motivation. The participation of agencies’ staff in thematic groups became uneven. UNDAF assignments were seen as additional workload, especially by those agencies with limited staff.

Two basic concepts are used in judging the **relevance** of the UNDAF: namely, a) the strategic positioning and focus of UN on key outcomes and impacts; and b) the outcomes and impacts relevant to national priorities, as well as consistent with the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Armenia and Sustainable Development Strategy. The UNDAF was found to be relevant to the needs of Armenia.

Generally, it is felt that the UNDAF’s contribution to achieving better synergies among the programmes of UN agencies was limited. There were some synergies between the particular UN agencies but these were to a large extent at the programme level and not necessarily attributed to the existence of the UNDAF.

In general terms, progress towards outcomes as delineated in the UNDAF, is likely to be sustainable. However, evidence will become available only when the programmes of each agency are subjected to an in-depth evaluation.

The implementing partners appear to have a high regard for UN agencies. They frequently cited responsiveness, neutrality, administrative efficiency and flexibility, as well as UN’s understanding of the realities of Armenia. The donor agencies also expressed high satisfaction with the UN. Overall, the UNDAF appears to be perceived positively.

Regarding the fulfillment of the objectives, it appears that almost all UN agencies will succeed in reaching the expected results, thereby making the UNDAF an effective instrument. However, as mentioned above, in certain cases there is no evidence yet for either the outcomes or the impacts. An important question is whether, had there been no UNDAF, the same results would have been achieved by the programmes and projects of various agencies? Based on the review of information provided by agencies; probably yes. It was mentioned that more persistent coordination and joint strategy is needed both from UN Country Team and from UN agencies.

This answer of course begs another question: Is the UNDAF a fifth wheel or does it bring added value? The answer to this question is that the UNDAF does add value, provided it is seen as a strategic and indicative document to enhance inter-agency cooperation and improve alignment with national priorities.

This report also concludes that the design was relevant to the realities of Armenia. Given the conditions of the country, it is reasonably efficient and effective. In addition, the perception that the UNDAF has created is positive.

The UNDAF should be sufficiently flexible to enable close interagency collaboration and cooperation, rather than striving to fill the appropriate boxes with different agencies’ specific projects as an after-thought.

This report urges that relevant, realistic and measurable indicators should be used. It is recommended that agencies establish quality control to ensure functional and effective UNDAF implementation structures. More frequent and responsive monitoring is needed. Regular analysis of monitoring indicators would strengthen coordination and enable the UN Country Team to adjust its programmes. The broadly formulated indicators and results in the M&E matrix have made joint monitoring difficult.

Too many indicators are likely to end up yielding conflicting results. A small number of measurable indicators should be selected, for which data will be readily available. Care should be taken that the monitoring, and collection of indicators is cost-efficient. The number of indicators should be decreased. It is less important to have so many of them as that the indicators are realistic and measurable.

Finally, the UNDAF should be viewed as a flexible instrument taking into consideration the particular mandates of the different UN agencies. Long and detailed outcomes tend to put agencies in a position to first design projects and then seek the appropriate outcome category in the UNDAF document for a particular project. Strategic planning should be top-down rather than the current bottom–up approach led by separate UN agencies prevails in the given case.

# 1. Introduction

## Background

Since 2003, Armenia has enjoyed steady growth (the GDP per capita increased from US$2863 in 2004 to US$3,290[[1]](#footnote-1) in 2013, an average annual growth of 6-8%), Armenia is classified as a lower middle income country with GDP per capita at $3,290[[2]](#footnote-2) in 2013. Economic growth has gradually picked up from 2.1% in 2010 to 7.2% in 2012 driven mainly by the mining sector and, to a lesser extent, agro-industries. The international financial crisis and the global recession have also affected the country - Armenia's economy shrank by 14.1% in 2009. Shortcomings still exist in public management, in the employment market, and in environmental management; periodic energy shortages occur; and infrastructure is broken down. There are a number of similar issues.

During the transition period, Armenia has undergone political, economic and social transformations, with some reduction in inequality[[3]](#footnote-3) and unemployment, coupled with growing wages, and increased pensions and other social transfers. Growth in migrant remittances became the main engines behind further poverty reduction – down to 23.5% in 2008. Poverty became shallower with a poverty gap[[4]](#footnote-4) at 3.1%. The severity of poverty declined to 0.8%. These developments led to the decision to revise the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper by the Government. National priorities are reflected in Sustainable Development Strategy. Poverty continued to be higher in urban areas, excluding Yerevan, where the poverty rate was the lowest. [[5]](#footnote-5)

The adverse impacts of the financial, economic, debt, realization and trust crisis hit the Armenian economy hard starting in the fourth quarter of 2008, plunging the economy into a deep recession in 2009. With the economy contracting by 14.1 percent, both the incidence of poverty and its gap and severity increased in 2012 as compared to 2008. By 2012, more than third of population (32.4 percent) was poor, 13.5 percent was very poor and 2.8 percent was extremely poor.[[6]](#footnote-6) The poverty gap in 2012 was up to 5.6 percent and the severity of poverty was 1.6 percent. In 2012, poverty indicators did not significantly differ by urban (32.5 percent) and rural (32.1 percent) areas. Over 2008-2012, poverty incidence in rural areas increased faster than in the urban areas (4.9 vs. 4.6 percent points). The capital Yerevan had the lowest poverty incidence (25.6 percent) in 2012. In 2013, Armenian economy witnessed a 3.5 percent growth; the incidence of extreme poverty, poverty gap and severity of poverty were lower than in 2011. In conjunction with the increasing income inequality, and high inflation, the economic recession contributed to decreased consumption of the population.

Ensuring sustainable growth through national security and active economic policy is the main priority of the government of Armenia. The key priorities for the Government of Armenia are: maintenance of macroeconomic stability and reaching high rates of economic growth, social integration and consolidation, development of human capital, establishment of effective public, local self-governing and private sector management systems and the introduction of the principles of corporative management, and harmonized regional development[[7]](#footnote-7).

## 1.2 Context

In 1997, as part of the UN reform agenda, the UN Secretary-General called the United Nations to articulate a coherent and unified vision and strategy for a united approach towards common development goals at the country level. In response to this, the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) was adopted as a strategic, medium-term results framework. It describes the collective vision and response of the UN system to national development priorities and results.

At present, the UN Country Team in Armenia is comprised of 14 Agencies, Funds and Programmes. The UN Country Team is headed by the UN Resident Coordinator and supported by the Resident Coordinator’s Office. The technical coordination between the UNCT agencies takes place in the UN Communications Group; the Operations Management Team; four Thematic Working Groups around the Outcomes of the UNDAF (2010-2015) and three cross-cutting working groups on gender, HIV/AIDS and disaster management.

In 2005, the United Nations launched its first concerted effort to assist Armenia. This effort brought together several UN specialized agencies, funds and programmes that, together with multilateral and bilateral aid organizations, the Bretton Woods institutions, the Government and civil society organizations developed the first United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the period of 2005-2009.

The second UNDAF, currently under review, covers the period of 2010-2015. It focuses on the following key results:

* Inclusive and sustainable growth is promoted by reducing disparities and expanding economic opportunities for vulnerable groups;
* Democratic governance is strengthened by improving accountability, promoting institutional and capacity development and expanding people’s participation;
* Access and quality of social service is improved for vulnerable groups;
* Environment and disaster risk reduction is integrated into national and local development frameworks

These key results are in line with country’s commitments to the MDGs, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the Sustainable Development Programme. It is expected that the realization of the objectives of the four pillars would contribute collectively to the overall goal of reducing economic, social and political inequality, enhancing good governance and improving environmental management.

## 1.3 The Guiding Principles of the UNDAF: Harmonization and Alignment

An important part of the UN reform launched in 1997 was for the UN to adopt a unified programme approach at country level. This process is spearheaded by the UN Development Group (UNDG). This process was in line with the new framework in the form of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the country.

The Millennium Summit of 2000 and resulting from it the Millennium Declaration forged a new framework in the form of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for multilateral cooperation. Those are concrete, time bound goals and targets which provide a unifying development agenda world-wide. The MDGs focus on eight major development results to be achieved by 2015:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
2. Achieve universal primary education.
3. Promote gender equality and empower women.
4. Reduce child mortality.
5. Improve maternal health.
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.
7. Ensure environmental sustainability.
8. Develop a global partnership for development.

Harmonizing the procedures of various UN agencies started in 2001, with the UN General Assembly tasking the UNDGto simplify their tasks and procedures in three key areas: programme preparation and approval; programme implementation (including financial modalities); and monitoring and evaluation. Harmonization and Alignment aims at optimizing the impact of UN interagency cooperation. It includes:

* A joint programming process for the UN Country Team in each country based on national development priorities[[8]](#footnote-8)
* Financing mechanisms, including the options to channel or pool funds, and common procedures for cash transfer to national counterparts.
* One Common Country Assessment providing the basis for a common, results–based UNDAF;
* A results-based management approach, with a "results matrix" at the core;
* A transparent, participatory, and inclusive methodology;
* Leadership of the UNCTs by the Resident Coordinators (RCs);
* Support to develop relevant capacities of implementing national counterparts.

A Guidance Note on Joint Programming was issued by the UNDG in 2003, and a revised version in 2014. The Note provides the rationale for joint programming i.e., pooling of resources for greater effectiveness, defines joint programmes, describes the steps for joint programming and provides guidance on how to develop and manage a joint programme, and indicates fund management options for joint programmes.

## 1.4 Methodology

The methodology used in this assignment is the one developed and used by the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG).[[9]](#footnote-9) It consists of simultaneous use of perception, validation and documentation in order to assess why and how the outcomes have been achieved or are likely to be achieved at the end of the cycle.

The overall evaluation approach was based on qualitative methods based on a review of the UNDAF Results Framework for the description of the intended results, indicators and benchmarks that were used; examination of contextual information and baselines contained in national and United Nations publications and reports; and validation of information about the status of results through probing (where possible) the key indicators and interviews with key informants.

During the evaluation data collection process in total 50 persons were interviewed either via a) face to face interviews, b) telephone or Skype interviews, or c) semi-structured questionnaires (see Annex 4). Evaluation questions were developed according to Evaluation ToR and considering the specific responsibilities and involvement of agencies and were reflected in the evaluation plan developed in the preparation phase of works (see Annex 3). Interlocutors were represented UN agencies, Government, Development agencies, Civil Society and two other organizations. Composition structure of interviewed persons is the following;

*Chart 1: Structure of interviewed people by organizations, %*

The evaluation findings and conclusions were based on analysis and assessment of four key areas of inquiry as illustrated in the Exhibit 2 on the evaluation design.

*Chart 2: Evaluation design*

**CPAP**

**OUTCOMES**

Determine whether or not the UN agency programmes are contributing to the UNDAF Outcomes in a coordinated manner

**UNDAF OUTCOMES**

Assess whether or not the UNDAF Outcomes and UN interventions are relevant, appropriate and strategic to national goals.

**UNDAF**

**INDICATORS**

Determine whether or not the UNDAF Outcome Indicators have occurred; and if they measure relevant changes

**DEVELOPMENT**

**CHANGES**

Assess whether or not the UNDAF results have made desired impact on the lives of the people

RELEVANCE EFFECTIVENESS EFFICIENCY SUSTAINABILITY

**Evaluation Design**

Review of all written documentation.[[10]](#footnote-10) These documents include, but are not limited to Country Programme Action Plans, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Sustainable Development Program, UNDAF, specific project documents and their progress reports, and evaluation reports.

The concrete steps include:

* Desk review of the key documents: As a preparation for the documentation review the RC office prepared a list of key documents to be examined. As a secondary source, the evaluator identified a number of relevant documents from which further qualitative appreciation could be obtained. For an exhaustive list of documents used for the preparation of this report see Annex I.
* Briefing and interviews with United Nations Country Team (UNCT) representatives of cooperating UN agencies, corresponding government entities, civil society organizations and beneficiaries. These interviews were of open-ended nature. Semi-structured stakeholder interviews were conducted based on the evaluation questions developed. For the purpose of including staff members in this evaluation and ensure clarity in the approach, a questionnaire formulating main evaluation questions has been developed according to ToR, which was suggested to be shortened by the UNCT. An integral version of the questionnaire is available in Annex II.
* Preparation of the draft report with special emphasis on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, degree of change, and sustainability. Sustainability was scrutinized especially to assess whether perceived positive changes/outcomes in the development situation will be of enduring nature.
* Presentation of major findings and conclusions/debriefing with RC and the staff of UNCT and other concerned entities and key stakeholders.
* Finalization of the draft report based upon feedback received.

Within the conceptual frame of reference two points must be elucidated, be it briefly. For the purpose of this Report **outcomes** are the actual or intended changes in development conditions that the Framework is seeking to support, whereas **impacts** are those of long-term effects of programmes/interventions and contributions to UNDAF outcomes.[[11]](#footnote-11) While outcomes are usually observable at the end of the interventions, impacts are very much of a long-term proposition.[[12]](#footnote-12) The ToR of this evaluation requires the assessment of impacts. The Report complies with it; however, attention is called to the fact that the outcomes will be clearly substantiated whereas the impacts are fraught with the danger of being somewhat conjectural.

## 1.5 Objectives, purpose, scope of evaluation and limitations

The objectives of this evaluation were laid out in the Terms of Reference (see Annex 2). The purpose of the UNDAF Evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of the current UNDAF in terms of contribution to national development priorities and define lessons and recommendations for the next programming cycle.[[13]](#footnote-13) The **overall purposes** of the UNDAF evaluation are:

* **To support greater learning about what works, what does not and why in the context of an UNDAF.** The evaluation will provide important information for strengthening programming and results at the country level, specifically informing the planning and decision-making for the next UNDAF programme cycle and for improving United Nations coordination at the country level.
* **To support greater accountability of the UNCT to UNDAF stakeholders** by objectively verifying results achieved within the framework of the UNDAF and assessing the effectiveness of the strategies and interventions used.

The objectives of the UNDAF evaluation are:

* To assess the contribution made by the UNCT to national development results, using evaluation criteria and based on evidence (accountability);
* To identify the factors that have affected the UNCT's contribution, including enabling factors and bottlenecks (learning);
* To reach conclusions concerning the UN’s contribution across the scope being examined;
* To provide actionable recommendations for improving the UNCT's contribution, both on what it supports and how it provides this support, especially for incorporation into the next UNDAF.

This report will identify strengths and weaknesses in programme design and implementation, the sustainability of the results achieved, and provide recommendations on sustaining implementation of the activities initiated within the components for the next programming cycle.

These issues are discussed in Sections 2 and 3. The main thrust of these sections is to assess the achievements. This report also pays special attention to the issue of sustainability, for it is of utmost importance to assess the sustainability of outputs and outcomes if the recommendations made are to be realistic and implementable. The fourth section presents the conclusions reached, and makes recommendations on the implementation of remaining activities with respect to the next programming cycle.

The evaluation covers the implementation of the UNDAF (2010-2105) from 2010 to present.[[14]](#footnote-14) This evaluation was conducted in May - June 2014. The timing of this evaluation determined the priority areas to be analyzed in this report. The interviews for the completion of this report have been conducted with relevant interlocutors to the extent possible. Given the UNDAF implementation period of five years, staff mobility within UN Agencies and government officials, considerably influenced the quantity and pertinence of information received from interlocutors holding current key positions.

# 2. Key findings

## 2.1 Objectives

### 2.1.1 Objectives of the UNDAF

As it was pointed out in the previous section (1.5), there are four main objectives for the realization of which a series of projects have been designed and implemented or are being implemented. These projects in fact constitute clusters to achieve four interrelated objectives. They are as follows:

* Inclusive and sustainable growth is promoted by reducing disparities and expanding economic opportunities for vulnerable groups;
* Democratic governance is strengthened by improving accountability, promoting institutional and capacity development and expanding people’s participation;
* Access and quality of social service is improved for vulnerable groups;
* Environment and disaster risk reduction is integrated into national and local development frameworks.

### 2.1.2 Government Development Objectives

The objectives of the UNDAF, as indicated above, correspond in their totality to the Government’s development priorities. As far as it could be ascertained, there were strategic documents that can be referred to as overall Government’s development policy. The Republic of Armenia adopted a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP-I) in August 2003.[[15]](#footnote-15) The PRSP-I aimed at generating high rates of economic growth and redistributing this growth to social programmes for the poorest and most socially disadvantaged. By implementing the PRSP-I, the Government aimed to establish a sound foundation for eradicating mass poverty and improving living standards by 2015 in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). To ensure the implementation of the strategy, the Government has adopted a Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework (MTEF) for the first period of PRSP-I from 2004 to 2006 and relevant ministries and state agencies have developed comprehensive action plans based on the PRSP\_I strategies and goals. The Government aimed to use PRSP-I as a framework for coordinating the contributions and activities of bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors. The analysis of the PRSP-I (2003), Sustainable Development Program (2009 - 2021) and Prospective Development Strategic Programme (2014 - 2025) shows that there is a complete concordance between the Government priorities and the focus areas of the UNDAF.

In 2008-09 Armenia was hit by the global economic downturn. It experienced the most severe economic contraction since the early years of transition. The impact of the crisis has been felt on multiple fronts. To address the crisis Government of Armenia elaborated and adopted an Anti-Crisis Action Plan[[16]](#footnote-16).

## 2.2 UNDAF Design and Preparation

## 2.2.1 Design

The UNDAF appears to have been prepared thoroughly. The overall preparation of the UNDAF has followed the logical steps of prioritizing and liaising with the Government in order to assure alignment with PRSP-I, SDP and MDGs. The UNDAF that emerged clearly identified the issues to be tackled, with relevant outputs, outcomes and the expected impacts. Baselines are delineated; output indicators, which are mostly quantitative, appear to facilitate assessment of progress. However, many indicators are not realistic and do not illustrate the change.

The UNDAF was defined broadly in order to accommodate the ongoing programme actions and mandates of the agencies. Furthermore, while the UNDAF objectives were jointly defined by the UN agencies in consultation with the national stakeholders, they were not always used as the programme framework by all UN agencies.

### 2.2.2 Preparation Process

The UNDAF document is based on extensive consultations with stakeholders, national and international, internal and external during the preparation phase.

As per the UNDG Guidelines on UNDAF Preparation, the UNCT opted for UN-led analytical work to assess development needs. Thus, instead of a full-fledged Common Country Assessment it commissioned Country Development Needs Assessment report, which was based on already available analytical materials by the UN system and donor community. It was revealed that the choice of priority areas in the UNDAF documents has been made in line with the national priorities, and MDGs, and reflects the mandates, capacities and comparative advantages of the agencies participating in the UNDAF development.

Although national stakeholders interviewed for the purpose of this report largely support the priorities identified for the UN action, the validation of the consultative process remained weak. Overall, government interlocutors have little or no knowledge of the UNDAF process as a strategic framework for the UN agencies. Consultations had been conducted mainly by each individual agency rather than jointly, as the UNCT, promoting the UNDAF concept and the UN reform objectives. This resulted in little awareness by national partners of the UNDAF process and purpose.

The general observation is that the civil society and donor community were much involved during the UNDAF design and preparation process, while to a lesser degree during implementation. National partners recognize more of the role and activities of individual UN agencies and their contribution to the country’s development priorities, rather then identify the UN as a unified partner and its collective impact.

### 2.2.3 Implementation Process

Projects implemented under the UNDAF have been developed by individual agencies and were implemented as such. There was not much integral work and joint programming as the process lacked cohesiveness at the planning stage. With the ambition for more joint programming at the outset of the UNDAF, however with little core resources committed to such UNCT attempts to mobilize additional resources for joint initiatives were not always successful. Thus, in total, during 2010-2013 years, there were six joint initiatives, and six joint programs undertaken. Consequently, overall UNDAF implementation continued through individual agency’s work, with limited coordination vis-à-vis UNDAF Thematic Groups.

Partners mostly work with the UN agencies bilaterally within those sectors where they have common areas and sector specific projects.

Each UNDAF Outcome group conducted annual progress reviews of the respective Outcomes work, reflected in an annual progress report. UNDAF Annual Review Meetings were conducted, at which these progress reports were presented and discussed. The UN Resident Coordinator’s Office supports the work of the UNDAF Outcome group throughout the year, and consolidates the annual reports of the Thematic Groups.

These reviews provided an overview of progress against indicators as formulated in the UNDAF M&E matrix but does not provide much of an analytical summary of achievements, and areas where progress is lacking, nor an update of assumption and risks, making it difficult to assess the level of achievement and obtained results. The implementation process is guided by the results and the M&E matrix.

These tools provide a mechanism for structured and systematic monitoring of the implementation stages and outputs. The matrix is considered to be adequately formulated and allows for flexibility in adapting to social and economic changes affecting the operational context through the information fed into the assumptions and risks column. In the UNDAF implementation, these tools have not been utilized to their full potential.

For instance, as the global financial crisis affected the economy, the UNDAF matrix and indicators could have been reviewed, ensuring flexibility of strategy. The materialization of the UNDAF Outcomes may have been influenced by the severe financial crisis. The assumptions and the risks have not been regularly updated and analyzed in order to determine the effects and the impact that the financial situation may have had on the realization of the UNDAF Outcomes.

### 2.2.4 UNDAF Implementation structure (Thematic Groups structure)

An UNDAF Steering Committee was established to provide oversight to the UNDAF. The UN Resident Coordinator’s Office served as a secretariat of the UNDAF Steering Committee. The UNDAF Steering Committee has not met in recent years.

UNDAF Thematic Groups were established to coordinate, monitor and support the evaluation of the UNDAF. At the end of the year each Thematic Group conducted an Annual Progress Review of the respective UNDAF Thematic Groups and should prepare an Annual Progress Report. The UNDAF Thematic Groups were also to set a dynamic scene for mobilizing joint programmes. . Following the UNDAF structure, four UNDAF Thematic Groups were established;

*Table 1: UNDAF Thematic Groups*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  Outcome groups | Chair |
| Equitable Economic Opportunities | UNIDO Head of Operations |
| Democratic Governance  | UNDP Deputy Resident Representative |
| Social Services | UNICEF Representative |
| Environmental Issues and Crisis Management | UNDP Environmental Governance Portfolio Manager |

The UNDAF Thematic Groups met actively in the first years of the UNDAF, particularly in 2010-2012, but meetings became more random after that. In 2012, however, the thematic areas covered by the UNDAF Thematic Groups were discussed during newly set-up thematic donor coordination groups, such Democratic Governance, Environmental Sustainability, Social Services, Economic Development, etc. Frequent staff fluctuation, primarily among the government and development agencies, contributed to loss of impetus and motivation. The participation of agencies’ staff in thematic groups became uneven and irregular. It seems that the work plans of the Thematic Groups were based on those of individual agencies. In some cases, UNDAF-related assignments were seen as constituting an additional workload to staff, particularly by the UN agencies with limited number of staff.

The performance of the Thematic Groups would have benefited from a more structured meeting calendar which was observed and which would have ensured continuity and would have provided the basis for a documented process. Such a regular and systematic process would have improved the quality of data inserted in the M&E matrix and provided the steering committee with up-to-date information about UNDAF implementation, especially difficulties encountered and progress achieved. Furthermore, such a systematic approach would have facilitated the gathering of results information for the annual review.

For effective coordination and cooperation, agencies must commit resources, agree on frequency and regularity of the Thematic Group meetings and establish quality control. This is essential to fulfill the purpose of the UNDAF to bringing agencies together in planning implementation and monitoring - not exclusively where joint funding is the main factor of cohesion.

. Chairs should maintain full ownership and accountability for the Thematic Groups and continue sending out communications themselves. With the support of a strong secretariat led by accountable chairs, joint programming and monitoring through the Thematic Groups could be enhanced. Chairs of the Thematic Groups should bear the responsibility for monitoring and providing consolidated updates on the results matrix on an annual basis, drawing from inputs by Agency technical staff.

## 2.3 Coordination

Joint Programming and Thematic Groups workplans are essential for effective UNDAF implementation which ensures a) UNDAF contribution to achieving better synergies among the programmes of UN agencies, b) enhancement of joint programming between agencies and specific joint programmes, c) Increased effectiveness of individual agencies as a result of joint programming. All interlocutors gave low marks to these expected results due to the lack of effective joint programming.

UNDAF coordination was more effective in the first two years of the UNDAF cycle, decreasing gradually during the following years. The UNDAF was not effectively used for programme coordination.

However, somemembers of the UNCT noted that the UNDAF created a sense of teamwork, while others added that the UNDAF annual reviews helped them to see the big picture and to look beyond their respective agency programmes. Other UN agencies’ staff members also observed that the UNDAF was not particularly effective in coordinating programme implementation, noting its coordination and monitoring weaknesses

There was a moderate level of coordination between the UN and the Government. Government representatives noted that there was a good coordination with MoFA during UNDAF design and a certain level of coordination during its implementation, mainly to avoid duplications, but less at a strategic level. According to the interview data, MoFA would like to be more involved not only in the design phase, but also in UNDAF implementation. However, the interviews with the UN staff revealed that since the outset of the UNDAF process, the UNDAF was designed, prepared and co-signed with the Prime Minister’s Office, the overall coordination was conducted through Prime Minister’s Office, and the day-to-day cooperation vis-à-vis national co-chairs of the UNDAF Thematic Groups.

Several Government officials within sector ministries observed that overlap and duplication of activities between projects of different agencies in the same result area was coordinated and managed by them rather than by the UNCT. Also it was perceived by some that time was wasted by attending meetings on similar issues with different UN Agencies. A case was reported when such duplication was prevented by a ministry itself. This could be effectively addressed by within the Thematic Groups.

## 2.4 Monitoring and review

UN supported the strengthening of the monitoring and evaluation capacity of national actors,

a) UNDAF does not have a strong monitoring system. This resulted in poor implementation of the following requirement of the UNDAF: “The system will depend to a great extent on the quality of, and methodologies used to track the indicators for each of the UNDAF areas of cooperation (p.17 of the Guidelines on UNDAF preparation)”.

b) There are weak links between UNDAF monitoring and national monitoring systems.

c) The indicators to monitor UNDAF implementation have not been adjusted in accordance to the indicators of the Sustainable Development Program.

It was envisaged that during the monitoring process, special attention would be given to tracking the major risks and assumptions that may impact positively or negatively on the achievement of UNDAF objectives, for example: Impact of the global financial crisis on the development of Armenia’s economy and social sectors, the rate of its growth and consequently, impact on Armenia’s poverty reduction efforts during the period covered by the UNDAF. These risks were not considered and evaluated properly, resulting in poor monitoring, evaluation and implementation of UNDAF process.

The M&E framework did not effectively capture the UNDAF results. The indicators did not sufficiently reflect the results of UN Agencies included under “Role of UN Agencies”. In addition, the M&E Framework did not have adequate details such as responsibility for monitoring and data collection, frequency of data collection and sources of data. This would have helped ensure that harmonized data is collected and used in reporting and decision-making. In addition, to ensure the sustainability of monitoring of indicators and their effective use in development planning, it would be more appropriate to assign greater responsibility for monitoring indicators to appropriate national institutions. For example, the Ministry of Health could monitor all indicators related to the health sector, and the Ministry of Environment Protection monitors indicators related to environment. This of course, would require that adequate capacity development on monitoring with the national institutions. This would also help ensure that results from the interventions of all UN agencies contributing to joint Outputs are monitored at the aggregate level, rather than at project and activity level.

The UNDAF M&E Framework included some indicators that were not measurable. UN staff members also noted that some of the indicators were too ambitious and could not be achieved. There was also no evidence of any joint monitoring of indicators by UN Agencies or by UN Agencies and Government. Joint monitoring is particularly important and useful to ensure that everyone is using the same data for decision-making and programme development.

The Monitoring process did not help UN Agencies and other development partners assess the strength and weaknesses as well as the results of their programs and projects.

# 3. UNDAF Assessment

## 3.1 Relevance

Two basic concepts are the guiding pillars in deciding the relevance of the UNDAF: a) the strategic positioning and focus of the UN on key outcomes and impacts; and b) the relevance of outcomes and impacts to national priorities, as well as consistency with the Millennium Development Goals in Armenia[[17]](#footnote-17) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*.* A Common Country Assessment was not used in the preparation of UNDAF. It relied instead mostly on the Government’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.[[18]](#footnote-18)

The concept of human development was promoted and integrated into national strategies, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the Sustainable Development Program. Committed to helping the Government in implementation of its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper relevant contributions were supporting aligned programs that contribute to the four outcomes for sustained growth.

UN work has been in line with national policies and strategies to reduce inequalities and poverty at different levels.[[19]](#footnote-19) In particular, considering that the macroeconomic framework of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper aimed at creating additional non-agricultural jobs in 2003-2015, the development of the private sector, especially SME sector, becomes one of the main preconditions for reducing poverty and inequality and increasing the population’s incomes from labor. Contributions have also been relevant to the Government anti-crisis programme, which aimed at minimizing the adverse consequences of the global crisis, but also to lay sound groundwork for sustainable development and new types of economic relationship in the country with strong focus on business environment improvement, engagement of financial resources for SME lending and creation of new jobs in these frameworks.[[20]](#footnote-20) Sector development strategies were considered as well, including the SME development strategy, Balanced Territorial Development strategy, and the Rural and Agriculture Sustainable Development for 2010-2020.

The strengthening of capacities of key institutions is a recurrent theme in all these documents, although there is not a single stand-alone capacity development project. To track properly the advances made, including towards the MDGs and the Post-2015 sustainable development goals, is of paramount importance. Enhancing the capacity of local communities so that they can participate in the progress of MDGs as it is a key component of good governance*.*

UN support to environment and disaster risk reduction were also closely aligned with national priorities, promoting effective management of natural resources in line with sustainable development principles.

Hence, this report expresses the opinion that the expected outcomes and impacts reflect the priorities of the Government and the overall mandate of the UNDAF. All programmes under review were found to be relevant and pertinent to the expected outcomes, enhancing capacities of designated institutions and contributing to the Millennium Development Goals.

The relevance of the strategic positioning of the UN is confirmed by the support it is receiving from the donor community. This report finds that the interventions were timely and relevant and consistent with UN strategic goals and the goals of the Government.

## 3.2 Efficiency

Efficiency can be measured in a variety of ways. One method is to estimate the proportion of the resources that UN allots to a set of outcomes to their administrative costs. Another method is to compare the extent of UN’s contribution to the outcomes and impacts with that of its partners.

Effectiveness poses the question whether, given the budget, the specified output could have been achieved at a lower cost. The consultant does not have any comparative data to make a fair judgment. Nor does UN have a system to capture financial data that would allow such a comparison. However, given the outputs and their qualities and the seemingly modest sums allocated to them, it can be said that the UN Country Team was effective.

Interlocutors interviewed for this evaluation face difficulties to answer the questions on efficiency due to the lack of information on financial resources of UN support. Each agency has its own financial data and they feel that there has been no common or centralized analysis of financial data.

Based on the total UNDAF budget figures and indicative annual budget delivery numbers (provided in the UNDG website, RC annual reports, but also more recent updates received from the UNCT) the following delivery rate has been observed between 2010 through 2013:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Total UNDAF budget (2010-2015) | Indicative Budget Delivery Rates | Total budget delivery rate2010-2013 |
| 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
| **$72,185,000** | 19.4% | 20.1% | 16.6% | 31.9% | **88.7%** |

A relatively steady annual budget delivery rate has been observed, with a significant improvement beginning the year 2013, during which the budget delivery has almost doubled as compared to the previous year, particularly due to the introduction of the EU-funded “Integrated Border Management” project.

According to UNCT-compiled data, the budget available under all four Outcome Groups for the current year (2014) comprises $23.8 mln. If implemented by the end of the current year, it will add another 33% of budget delivery as compared to the total UNDAF budget planned, exceeding the total budget by over 20% one year ahead of completing the current UNDAF cycle.

The EU is the most important multilateral donor. Norway, Italy and the United States are other top donors. In 2013 the Russian Federation has become a donor for the UNAIDS Assistance Programme for four Countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) in Combating Infectious Diseases (2013-2015). In addition the contributions made by the Government and the private sector should also be mentioned. Some effective cost-sharing models were revealed when Government allocated more than 50% of budget, for example in case of SME development. This shows high commitment of the Government regarding collaboration with the UN.

## 3.3 Effectiveness

Most of the outcomes are likely to be achieved. This finding however is mostly based on the information provided to the consultant by the UN Agencies and the national counterparts,[[21]](#footnote-21) and to a lesser extent verification by indicators.

The UN’s contributions under the current UNDAF were effective in achieving a) inclusive and sustainable growth promotion by reducing disparities and expanding economic and social opportunities for vulnerable groups; b) strengthening democratic governance by improving accountability, promotion of institutional and capacity development and expanding people’s participation; c) improving access and quality of social services especially for vulnerable groups; and d) integration of environment and Disaster Risk Reduction into national and local development frameworks.

Contributions to **Outcome 1: Economic Growth** were led by UNDP, UNESCO, UNIDO, IOM, FAO and ILO. Under this outcome, UN agencies contributed to national policies, strategies and programmes reduce disparities between regions and specific vulnerable groups and vulnerable groups have greater access to economic opportunities in targeted regions of Armenia. Although it is challenging to credibly assess the degree of effectiveness given the available data, there have been notable achievements in the portfolio.

The UN supported the strengthening of regulatory framework and mechanisms to establish and revitalize the SME sector, by supporting start-ups and providing access to entrepreneurship training and financial resources, with special focus on youth and women-led businesses, enhancements in occupational safety and health, improvements in quality management, promotion of investments and export-oriented industries based on technology transfer and innovations, development of income generating policies and practices, including for vulnerable groups in remote areas and considering the role of culture in sustainable development, increasing employability of disabled people through adaptation of workplaces at the employers, VET education, Public Private Partnerships and Corporate Social Responsibility strategies.

Interventions under the **Outcome 2: Democratic Governance** were led by UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, and UNFPA. Contributions were effective in ensuring the progressive realization of human rights, capacity improvement of governmental bodies to ensure transparency, accountability and inclusiveness, strengthening of national systems of data collection, including conduction of Census, reporting and monitoring of human development and enhancing capacities of communities and people to claim their rights and participate in decision-making processes.

The UN was effective in contributing to establishing functional democracy and good governance by improving legal and regulatory mechanisms such as drafting the Law on Domestic Violence[[22]](#footnote-22), Law on Disabilities, National Action Plan for the protection of the Rights of the Child for 2013-2016, State strategic paper on violence against children; the National Action Plans on Gender Equality and Gender-based Violence, Criminal Procedures Code, Law on Strengthening Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for men and women[[23]](#footnote-23). The UN was also successful in supporting institutional capacity and individual skills and capabilities, such as developing a database for populations in need of social services; mainstreaming counter-trafficking into school curricula and teacher training programmes country-wide, development of a methodology for the preparation of territorial social plans, upgrading of rural and urban community database, strengthening of capacities for border management agencies based on the principles of Integrated Border Management, and operational procedures and support to cross-border cooperation between border agencies of Armenia and Georgia; and awareness raising and knowledge of human rights for direct and indirect beneficiaries covered by the programmatic interventions.

**Outcome 3: Access and quality of social services**was led by UNICEF, WHO, ILO, UNAIDS, WFP and UNFPA. The UN’s contributions were effectively targeted to policy and legislation promotion to ensure equitable access to quality services, including health and education, reproductive health and rights, enhancing access to quality HIV and TB prevention, treatment, care and support services, promoting inclusive education policies and strategies, ensuring access to and retention in quality schooling for the most vulnerable, promoting deinstitutionalization of children and their right to family life and strengthening institutional capacities and mechanisms to respond to the needs of vulnerable groups.

**Outcome 4: Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction**was led by UNDP, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNICEF, FAO and WHO. The UN was effective in contributing to new methodologies[[24]](#footnote-24), drafting laws and national environmental legislation[[25]](#footnote-25), including Forest Code and the Action Plan to Improve the Wildfire Management in Armenia, revising the National Action Plan of International Health Regulations, and updating databases. The UN also supported the formulation and adoption of Disaster Risk Reduction National Strategy (March 2012), development and introduction of Local Level Risk Management module, establishment of the Disaster Risk Reduction National Platform, regional disaster risk reduction teams, the Crisis Management Center under the Ministry of Emergency Situations, and enhancement of Seismic Stations.

The UN was effective in capacity development, disaster risk reduction was integrated into the national education and emergency policies and strategies (DRR National Strategy, State Programme of Education Development for 2011-2015) and education curriculum, and the Armenia National Plan of Action for Capacity Development in Education in Emergencies for 2013 was developed within the DRR National Platform, as well as in contributing to sustainable development of the agricultural sector through less hazardous agricultural inputs leading to improved agricultural practices. Another achievement under this outcome was the involvement of Armenia into the Sustainable Energy for All initiative. Innovative policies and practices for resource and energy efficient technologies, sound chemical management and cleaner production were developed and implemented. Another achievement was the removal of travel restrictions for people living with HIV from the existing law and sub legislative acts.

**Gender:** The gender thematic group contribution was effective in terms of ensuring practical mechanisms for advocating, disseminating and implementing gender related issues into program frameworks under the different outcome areas. A gender marker document was developed, which ranked project/programmes in terms of gender sensitiveness. Almost all contributions under the UNDAF outcomes were found to be gender sensitive.

The UN’s contributions were implemented with active participation and involvement of the Government, resulting in relevant and sustainable interventions. Also, interesting synergies were designed and effectively implemented between the different outcome groups. These could be considered as a strength of UN agencies which is however implemented by bottom-up approach rather than vice-versa.

*Table 3:**Assessing UNDAF 2010-2015 Outcome Indicators – poverty reduction and MDG achievement*

| **Focus area UNDAF 2010-2015** | **Outcome Indicator** | Comments on change |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome 1:** Inclusive and sustainable growth is promoted by reducing disparities and expanding economic and social opportunities for vulnerable groups  | % increase in the Human Development Index***Baseline:*** *HDI-0,777 (2006)****Target:*** *HDI-0,803 (based on SDP)****Status: HDI-0,729***  | No positive change |
| % decrease in the number of people living below the poverty and food lines***Baseline:*** *Poor population 25%* *Extreme poor 3.8% (2007)****Target:*** *Poor population 10.1%* *Extreme poor 1.6%****Status:*** *Poor population 32.4% (2012)* *Extreme poor 2.8% (2012)* | No positive change |
| % decrease in the Gini coefficient***Baseline:*** *0.37% (2008)****Target:*** *up to 0.31%****Status:***  |  |
| Proportion of population below the 4.30 USD (PPP adjusted) per day***Baseline:*** *39.2% (2007)****Target:*** *<20% (11)[[26]](#footnote-26)****Status:*** *63.3% (5.00 USD, 2012)* | No positive change |
|  | GDP per capita compared to EU average per capita***Baseline:*** *18% (2007)****Target:***  *>30% (35)****Status:***  |  |
|  | Family allowance budget expenditure to poverty gap ratio***Baseline:***  *34.3% (2006)****Target:***  *>50% (80)****Status:***  |  |
|  | The ratio of tax revenues in GDP***Baseline:***  *19.5% (2007)****Target:***  *>22.5% (23.5)****Status:*** *19.2%**(2012)* | No change |
| **Outcome 2:** Democratic governance is strengthened by improving accountability, promoting institutional and capacity development and expanding people’s participation. | Government effectiveness, governance score***Baseline:***  *-0.31 (2007)****Target:***  *+0.37(MDG report)****Status:***  |  |
| Regulatory quality, governance score***Baseline*** *+0.27(2007)****Target*** *+0.67****Status:***  |  |
| Rule of law index, governance score***Baseline*** *-0.51(2007)****Target*** *+0.11****Status:***  |  |
| Voice and accountability, governance score***Baseline*** *-0.59 (2007)****Target*** *+0.83****Status:***  |  |
| **Outcome 3:** Access and quality of social services is improved especially for vulnerable groups. | Government expenditures for social sectors (% of GDP)***Baseline:*** *Health – 1.5%; Education – 3%; Social Protection – 6% (2008)****Target:*** *Health – 2.5%; Education – 4%; Social Protection – 7.8%)****Status:*** *Health – 1.6%; Education – 2.6%; Social Protection – 7.2%) (2012)* | No change, excluded Social Protection |
| Infant mortality rate ***Baseline:***  *13.9 per 1,000 live births (2006, NSS)****Target:***  *8 per 1000 live births****Status:*** *10.8 per 1000 live births (2012)* | Positive change- decrease 3.1 per cent point  |
| Under-five mortality rate ***Baseline:***  *12,3 per 1000 live births (2007)****Target****: <10 (9,6) per 1000 live births****Status:*** *12,1 per 1000 live births (2012)* | No change |
| Maternal mortality rate ***Baseline:***  *38.8 per 100,000 live births (2008, MOH)****Target****: 25 per 100,000 live births* ***Status:*** *18.8 per 100,000 live births (2012)* | Achieved |
| Unmet need for family planning, total ***Baseline*** *13,3% (2005)****Target*** *<7%****Status:*** *21.3% (DHS 2010)* |  |
| **Outcome 4:** Environment and disaster risk management is integrated into national and local development frameworks. | Environmental Performance Index (EPI)***Baseline:*** Score - 77.8, rank - 62***Target:*** Score – 80, rank 45(min of new EU member countries)***Status:***  |  |
| % increase in state budget allocation for environment protection***Baselin****e:* Allocations from state budget for environmental expenditures in 2007 stands for 4.1 billion AMD. ***Target:*** Increase level of environmental expenditures from the state budget up to the level of environmental revenues. Local communities receive 100 % of environmental charges paid by business operating in the communities.***Status:***  |  |

*Source: National Statistical Service , status of indicators are calculated by the evaluator*

## 3.4 Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the durability of positive results after the termination of the technical cooperation. It is important to assess that the programme and project results are institutionalized and internalized. With respect to outcome and impact sustainability refers to the positive change in the situation will endure and lead to other programmes pursued by the Government.

This report adheres to the view that it would be bold to discuss the sustainability of UNDAF as such, since its sustainability will depend upon the sustainability of programmes that have completed at the end of the UNDAF cycle, end 2015, and upon their success or failure to yield outcomes that are, or are not, sustainable.

In general terms, however, overall outcomes as delineated in the UNDAF are likely to be sustainable, as the UNDAF is linked to the national priorities. Also, effective partnerships with Government ensure sustainability to the extent possible, although there were cases where proper follow-up by the government was not in place, resulting in delays and challenges, for example regarding the adoption of legislative acts and strategic documents.

However, it was observed that despite the majority of UN interventions being designed to be sustainable, this was not sufficient to ensure the sustainability. It is important in this regard to have effective partnerships and exit strategies for programmes and projects.

Strong national ownership was observed in most of UN agencies interventions. This is important to achieve long-term results. Local NGOs and Community-Based Organizations have been involved in delivering sustainable environmental and social benefits at the local level. Support to capacity building and institutional system improvement was provided, including to municipal service, VET education, social partners, local self-governance bodies’ capacities, health sector beneficiaries, and DRR and environment beneficiaries. The UN’s contributions have been based on holistic and participatory approaches, ensuring a value chain principle.

Overall, it can be stated that the prospect for sustainability of results is promising and highly likely given the evidence, i.e. the close link between national priorities and expected UNDAF outcomes, contributing to national strategies and legislation, building national ownership at community and national level, ensuring synergies among the UN agencies and different outcome interventions, and developing strong capacity building for national stakeholders and beneficiaries.

## 3.5 Perceptions

Perception is a fairly recently introduced concept in evaluation. The benefit of this approach is to record the differences of views and opinions of partners on a specific programme or institution. If a programme/project is to be improved, it is important to know how the outsiders perceive its image, so that when the image is negative the missing or correct explanation can be introduced, or the elements that create this negative image can be modified. The consultant would like to make clear that the perceptions cited here are those of the interviewed, and do not necessarily reflect the views already expressed in this report.

Given the scope of work and time constraints, it was physically impossible to have a large sample to assess the perceptions of various entities of Government organizations, donors and the wide variety of beneficiaries. According to the Prime Minister decree to support UNDAF evaluation, responsible persons were appointed in each relevant ministry at International Department Head level. This procedure caused some delays with interviews and affected the number of interviews.

This section of the evaluation report analyses the perceptions of the respondents to the evaluation questions (see Annex IV). The interlocutors were asked to comment on the questions and score reflecting their perception of achievement. The scores are from 1-6 (1-the lowest and 6- the highest score). Among the 50 interlocutors, a total of 18 interlocutors have been interviewed for the survey and were used for this analysis. Among the 18 there are 10 UN staff, 1 development partner and 7 Government officials. The others either did not respond adequately and the answers could not be used or could not complete the questionnaire as not all questions were pertinent to their expertise. Only a sample of the evaluation questions has been reproduced for the purpose of this report.

The implementing partners appear to have a high regard for UN agencies. They frequently cited responsiveness, neutrality, administrative efficiency and flexibility, as well as UN’s understanding of the realities of Armenia and its long-term expertise.

**Evaluation Question 1: Is the distribution of roles and responsibilities among different UNDAF partners well defined in UNDAF 2010-2015?**

**Comment:** UNDAF is perceived by all partners as one joint document defining common partnership approaches, strategic directions and common results, which however, has moderate impact on planning and implementation on particular UN agencies’ and partners’ activities. The answers to this question are quite diverse. The score ranges from the highest to the lowest, but is overall above average with a score of 4.1. It is indicative that the two lowest scores were given by government officials. Those respondents that have given the highest score were the UN agencies.

**Evaluation question 6. To what extent and in what ways has UNDAF contributed to achieving better synergies among the programmes of UN agencies?**

**Comment:** The above show a more balanced set of answers. The score is below average with a total of 3.1. Many UN agencies thought that the UNDAF process brought the UN agencies closer together. Generally, it is felt that the UNDAF did not much contribute to achieving better synergies among the programmes of UN agencies. In some cases it was revealed that synergies were found at programme level and not at UNDAF level or due to UNDAF strategy.

**Evaluation Question 8: To what extent did the UNDAF promote effective partnerships and strategic alliances around the main UNDAF outcome areas (e.g. national partners, development partners, etc.)?**

**Comment:** Again, diverse answers were given to this question. The average score is 3.2 - slightly above average. Thus it could be stated that UNDAF partners perceive that UNDAF as moderately effective in promoting partnerships around the outcome areas. There is a space for further improvement. The lowest answers are dominating especially amongst the government officials and development partners.

**Evaluation question 12. To what extent and in what ways have national capacities been enhanced in government, civil society and NGOs?**

**Comment:** Respondents have more or less consolidated view on this question. Average score of 3.3 demonstrates that interlocutors perceived moderate sustainability of UN contributions in developing national capacity. Many interlocutors faced difficulties to assess this question mostly due to low awareness and familiarity with the results, for example by being new person in the position. It was also mentioned that they would be able to assess sustainability at the end of the program cycle as many of them are not completed so far and results are not available.

**Evaluation question 14: To what degree have the expected results, as defined in the UNDAF Results matrix, been achieved during the current UNDAF implementation in your area?**

**Comment.** With an average score of 3.0 the perception of success is average. The range is large, from 1 to 6. Most respondents concluded that the Outcomes were broadly defined and that a certain degree of success has been achieved. However, the existence of a monitoring system and objectively verifiable indicators should allow project personnel to have clearer understandings of the results and some kind of consensus on how much has been achieved. The absence of functioning result based monitoring allows for such variation in the perceptions of success.

**Evaluation question 16: To what degree was monitoring regular and continuous?**

**Comment:** The average score of 2.2 is low and demonstrates the low regularity and continuous character of monitoring process. Almost all respondents feel that monitoring should be improved and coordinated more effectively. A weak monitoring system resulted in low effectiveness in terms of achieving the UNDAF results, and poor coordination and implementation.

# 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

## 4.1 Conclusions

It has to be underlined that it is difficult to come up with complete and valid set of conclusions on the impact that UNDAF have had due to the fact that the evaluation, in line the UNDAF Preparation Guidelines, has been conducted during the penultimate year of the UNDAF. Thus the current UNDAF evaluation conclusions and recommendations parts should be viewed from that aspect and are attributable to the results of UN Agencies work during 2010-2013.

**Relevance (design and focus)**

1. The overall preparation of the UNDAF has followed the logical steps of prioritizing and liaising with the Government in order to assure alignment with Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Sustainable Development Program and Millennium Development Goals. The UNDAF that emerged clearly identified the issues to be tackled, with relevant outputs, outcomes and the expected impacts. Baselines are delineated; output indicators, which are mostly quantitative, appear to facilitate assessment of progress. However, many indicators are not realistic and do not illustrate the change.
2. The UNDAF strategic objectives were defined broadly in order to accommodate the ongoing programme actions and mandates of the agencies. Furthermore, while the UNDAF objectives were jointly defined by the UN Agencies in consultation with national stakeholders, they were not always used as the programme framework by all UN agencies. Priorities of individual agencies were at times competing with those of the UNDAF.
3. The priority areas in the UNDAF are in line with national priorities and reflect the mandates, capacities and comparative advantages of the agencies participating in the UNDAF.
4. The UNDAF process and document reflect the priorities and activities of the UN agencies present in Armenia.
5. The UNDAF document had moderate significance in UN agencies’ planning process and was more of a reflection of agencies general programme direction and project interest rather than a strategic document fulfilling a guidance role.

**Effectiveness**

1. The UNDAF succeeded to a larger extent at developing cohesive elements to enhance synergies among the UNCT.
2. Projects implemented under the UNDAF have been developed by individual agencies and were implemented as such. There has been limited integral work and joint programming, and the process lacked coherence at the planning stage.

**Efficiency**

1. A relatively steady annual budget delivery rate has been observed, with a significant improvement beginning the year 2013, during which the budget delivery has almost doubled as compared to the previous year, particularly due to the introduction of the EU-funded “Integrated Border Management” project. By the end of the fourth year (2013) of the UNDAF cycle, the implementation rate has reached 88.7%, with an additional 33% delivery expected by the end of the current year (2014). The observed trend secures well above 100% delivery rate already one year ahead of the UNDAF cycle.
2. The monitoring of the UNDAF implementation has been sporadic and implemented mainly through individual agency’s work. The idea of having common database with individual access to UN agencies is great, but it lacks adequate maintenance and regular coordination by preferably M&E focal points.
3. The established web-based M&E database should have resulted in analysis and recommendations for the UNDAF strategy development and effective implementation, thus helping UN agencies to be better strategically positioned in achieving common results and keeping motivated. This is not fully in place.
4. UNDAF Thematic Groups do not have their own annual monitoring indicators which should have been calculated in order to ensure UNDAF flexibility and changes. There is no ongoing monitoring of the UNDAF indicators.
5. Existing monitoring does not help UN agencies and other development partners assess their programmes strength, weaknesses and as well as the results of their programmes and projects.

**Impact**

1. National partners mostly recognize the role and activities of individual UN agencies and their contribution to country’s development priorities, but fail to identify the UN as a unified partner with a collective impact.

## 4.2 Recommendations

 **Effectiveness**

1. Duplications should be avoided and UNDAF is supposed to be an effective mechanism for effective resource mobilization and, avoiding duplications. Thematic groups and Joint Programming are essential for UNDAF effective implementation which would ensure (1) UNDAF contribution to achieving better synergies among the programmes of UN agencies and (2) UNDAF enhancement joint programming by agencies and resulted in specific joint programmes, (3) Enhancement of effectiveness for individual agencies as a result of joint programming.
2. UNDAF Thematic group staff participating in UNDAF development and implementation should be actively supported by agencies’ management. The contribution of staff to the goals and objectives of the UNDAF through the membership in the UNDAF thematic groups should be recognized and validated through the performance appraisal of staff. All agencies should adopt this modality in order for the UNDAF to be an effective framework for the UNCT planning, programming, implementation and monitoring.
3. Performance of the Thematic Groups would have benefited from a more structured meeting calendar. This would have ensured continuity and would have provided the basis for a documented process. A regular and systematic process would improve the quality of monitoring, providing the steering committee with up-to-date information on UNDAF implementation, including challenges and progress.
4. Civil society partners representing sectorial counterparts should be invited to participate more actively in the work of the UNDAF Thematic groups to ensure a more participatory approach, and promote knowledge exchange and ownership.

**Efficiency**

1. Assumptions and risks should be regularly updated and analyzed in order to determine the effects and the impact that the financial situation may have had on the achievement of the UNDAF Outcomes, for example through annual UN progress reports, which could also analyze achievements and areas where progress is lacking.
2. More frequent and responsive, coordinated monitoring is needed. Analysis of indicators would strengthen inter-agency coherence. Appropriate, realistic and measurable indicators should be established, adjusted and monitored.
3. Too many indicators (both on outcome and output level) are likely to end up yielding conflicting results. Long and detailed outcomes tend to put agencies in a position to first design projects and then seek the appropriate outcome category in the UNDAF document for a particular project. A small number of measurable indicators should be selected, for which data will be readily available. Care should be taken that the monitoring of indicators is cost-efficient. The number of indicators should be decreased.

**Impact**

1. In the national context, where the intervention logic is based on building partnerships, national ownership and capacity building, it is crucial to involve national partners during the entire UNDAF cycle to achieved better results.
2. The UNDAF should be viewed as a flexible instrument taking into consideration the particular mandates of the different UN agencies. Strategic planning should be top-down rather than the current bottom–up approach led by separate UN agencies, which is the case.

# 5. Annexes

## Annex 1: List of Documents Reviewed

* Government of the Republic of Armenia (2001); The Strategy Plan of Development till 2015.
* Country Programme Action Plan 2010-2015

RA Government’s anti-crisis action, progress and status, summary report, available at <http://www.gov.am/files/docs/475.pdf>, accessed 02.06.2014

* Perspective Development Strategic Programme of Republic of Armenia 2014-2025
* UNDG (2009); Guidelines for UN Country Teams on preparing UNDAF.
* UNEG, Evaluability of the UN Development Assistance Framework. 2006
* Norms for Evaluation in the UN System. 2004,
* UN, UNDAF Evaluation Guidelines. July 2005,
* UNEG, Study of the Evaluability of the UN Development Assistance, Framework. 2006
* UNEG, Evaluation in the UN system. April 2007
* UNDP/EO, Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results. New York, 2003
* Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators. New York 2006.
* UN Armenia (2008); UNDAF Annual Review2008, December 2008.
* UN Armenia (2008); Report on UNDAF Joint Review with Government, January 2008.
* Office of the Resident Coordinator United Nations in Armenia/Government of Armenia, UNDAF 2010-2015
* Office of the Resident Coordinator United Nations in Armenia /Government of Armenia, UNDAF 2005- 2009
* UNDP, Country Development Situation Assessment for Armenia. March 2008
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## Annex 2: Terms of References for National Consultant

These Terms of Reference set out the process, expected outcomes and scope of work for the national consultant on UNDAF evaluation.

**1. Background and Context**

In 1997, as part of the UN reform agenda, the UN Secretary-General called the United Nations to articulate a coherent and unified vision and strategy for a united approach towards common development goals at the country level. In response to this, the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) was adopted as a strategic, medium-term results framework. It describes the collective vision and response of the UN system to national development priorities and results

At present, the UN Country Team in Armenia is comprised of the 14 Agencies, Funds and Programmes. The UN Country Team is headed by the UN Resident Coordinator and supported by the Resident Coordinator’s Office. The technical coordination between the UNCT agencies takes place in the UN Communications Group; the Operations Management Team; four Thematic Groups around the Outcomes of the UNDAF (2010-2015) and three cross-cutting working groups on gender, HIV/AIDS and disaster management.

The UN Country Team works within the framework of the second generation UNDAF (2010-2015), which was adopted by the Government in 2009 and covers four Outcomes:

* UNDAF Outcome 1 - Inclusive and sustainable growth is promoted by reducing disparities and expanding economic opportunities for vulnerable groups;
* UNDAF Outcome 2 - Democratic governance is strengthened by improving accountability, promoting institutional and capacity development and expanding people’s participation;
* UNDAF Outcome 3 - Access and quality of social service is improved for vulnerable groups;
* UNDAF Outcome 4 - Environment and disaster risk reduction is integrated into national and local development frameworks.

In 2014, the UN Country Team in Armenia jointly with the national partners and other stakeholders will engage in developing of the third generation of UNDAF for the period of 2016-2020. As part of the formulation of the new UNDAF, the UN Country Team decided to commission an evaluation of the UNDAF (2010-2015) through a national consultancy. The UNDAF Evaluation is an external, independent exercise and is aimed at generating an independent assessment of successes, challenges and lessons learnt so that this can feed into the next UNDAF programming cycle.

**2. Purpose, Objective and Scope of the UNDAF Evaluation**

The evaluation covers the implementation of the UNDAF (2010-2105) from 2010 to present.

The purpose of the UNDAF Evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of the current UNDAF in terms of contribution to national development priorities and define lessons and recommendations for the next programming cycle. The **overall purposes** of the UNDAF evaluation are:

* **To support greater learning about what works, what doesn’t and why in the context of an UNDAF.** The evaluation will provide important information for strengthening programming and results at the country level, specifically informing the planning and decision-making for the next UNDAF programme cycle and for improving United Nations coordination at the country level.
* **To support greater accountability of the UNCT to UNDAF stakeholders** by objectively verifying results achieved within the framework of the UNDAF and assessing the effectiveness of the strategies and interventions used.

The **objectives** of the UNDAF evaluation are:

* **To assess the contribution made by the UNCT to national development results**, using evaluation criteria and based on evidence (accountability);
* **To identify the factors that have affected the UNCT's contribution**, including enabling factors and bottlenecks (learning);
* **To reach conclusions concerning the UN’s contribution across the scope being examined**;
* **To provide actionable recommendations for improving the UNCT's contribution**, both on **what** it supports and **how** it provides this support, especially for incorporation into the next UNDAF.

**3. Evaluation questions and methodology**

UNDAF outcomes will be assessed through open and structured discussions with key stakeholders, and through a comprehensive review of documents, a synthesis and analysis of data. Wherever monitoring systems will not be able to bring enough evidence, the assessment will be based on stakeholders’ perceptions.

* **Data collection** – the evaluation will use a multiple method approach, which could include desk review of reference materials such as UNDAF annual reviews and reports of individual agencies; and interviews (bilateral or thematic group meetings) with key national partners; and case studies on joint programmes and initiatives;
* **Stakeholder participation** – evaluation will be conducted in a participatory manner, ensuring the involvement of key stakeholders in all phases of the evaluation;
* **Validation** – all findings should be supported with evidence. Triangulation is preferable to be used to ensure that the information and data collected are valid. The evaluation results will be validated with national partners and stakeholders, and feed into the development of the next UNDAF.

The evaluation report will be discussed at a final stakeholder workshop.

The Evaluation criteria(used to measure UNCT contribution to the development outcomes):

* **Relevance** (UNDAF’s consistency with country needs, national priorities, its international and regional commitments, including human rights) and recommendations of HR mechanisms, sustainable development and the needs of people;
* **Effectiveness** (the extent to which the UNCT contributed to UNDAF outcomes);
* **Efficiency** (the extent to which outcomes are achieved with appropriate amount of resources and maintenance of low transaction costs);
* **Sustainability** (the extent to which benefits from development interventions have continued or likely after they have completed).

Specifically, UNDAF evaluation should address the following issues and provide recommendations as per the below criteria pillars:

1. Assess the ***relevance (design and focus)*** of the UNDAF, i.e. the quality of the formulation of results at different levels, i.e. the results chain. The following questions could be addressed:

* To what extent is the current UNDAF designed as a results-oriented, coherent and focused framework?
* Is it likely that the planned Country Programmes and projects and programme strategies will lead to the expected UNDAF results?
* Are expected outcomes realistic given the UNDAF timeframe and resources?
* To what extent and in what ways have risks and assumptions been addressed in UNDAF design?
* Is the distribution of roles and responsibilities among the different UNDAF partners well defined, facilitated in the achievement of results and have the arrangements been respected in the course of implementation?
* Do the Country Programmes and the UNDAF respond to the challenges of national capacity development and do they promote ownership of programmes by the national partners?
* Has the UNDAF results matrix been sufficiently flexible to adjust to evolving national policies and strategies e.g. Sustainable Development Strategy, during the current programme cycle?
* Were new issues and their causes as well as challenges that arose during the UNDAF cycle adequately addressed? (flexibility)
* To what extent have human rights principles and standards been reflected or promoted in the UNDAF and, as relevant, in the Country Programmes?
* To what extent and in what ways has a human rights approach been reflected as one possible method for integrating human rights concerns into the UNDAF?
* To what extent and in what ways are the concepts of gender equity and equalityand other cross-cutting issuesreflected in programming?
* Were specific goals and targets set?
* Was there effort to produce sex disaggregated data and indicators to assess progress in gender equity and equality?
* To what extent and how is special attention given to girls’ and women’s rights and empowerment?

2. Assess the validity of the stated collective ***comparative advantage*** of the UN System. The following question could be addressed:

* To what extent and in what ways have the comparative advantages of the UN organizations been utilized in the national context (including universality, neutrality, voluntary and grant-nature of contributions, multilateralism, and the special mandates of UN agencies)?

3. Assess the effectiveness of the UNDAF in terms of ***progress towards agreed UNDAF outcomes***: The following questions could be addressed:

* What progress has been made towards the realization of UNDAF outcomes as a contribution to the achievement of MDGs and in terms of indicators as reflected in the UNDAF M&E Plan?
* To what extent and in what ways was special emphasis placed on strengthening of national capacities, building partnerships, promoting innovations, and the realization of human rights and promoting gender equity and equality?
* Which are the main factors that contributed to the realization or non-realization of the outcomes? How were risks and assumptions addressed during the implementation of programmes and projects?
* To what extent and in what ways did UN support promote national execution of programmes and / or the use of national expertise and technologies?

4. Assess the ***effectiveness of the UNDAF*** as a coordination and partnership framework. The following questions could be addressed:

* To what extent and in what ways has UNDAF contributed to achieving better synergies among the programmes of UN agencies?
* Has the UNDAF enhanced joint programming by agencies and /or resulted in specific joint programmes? Were the strategies employed by agencies complementary and synergistic?
* Have agency supported programmes been mutually reinforcing in helping to achieve UNDAF outcomes? Has the effectiveness or programme support by individual agencies been enhanced as a result of joint programming?
* Did UNDAF promote effective partnerships and strategic alliances around the main UNDAF outcome areas (e.g. national partners, International Financial Institutions and other external support agencies)?

5. To the extent possible, assess the ***impact***of UNDAF on the lives of the poor, i.e. determine whether there is any major change in UNDAF indicators that can reasonably be attributed to or be associated with UNDAF, notably in the realization of MDGs, National Development Goals and the national implementation of internationally agreed commitments and UN Conventions and Treaties.

6. To the extent possible, assess the ***efficiency of the UNDAF as a mechanism to minimize transaction costs***of UN support for the government and for the UN agencies. The following questions could be addressed:

* To what extent and in what ways has UNDAF contributed to a reduction of transaction cost for the government and for each of the UN agencies.
* In what ways could transaction costs be further reduced?
* Were results achieved at reasonably low or lowest possible cost?

7. Analyze to what extent results achieved and strategies used by the supported Country Programmes and projects are ***sustainable*** (i) as a contribution to national development and (ii) in terms of the added value of UNDAF for cooperation among individual UN agencies**.** The following questions could be addressed:

* To what extent and in what ways have national capacities been enhanced in government, civil society and NGOs?
* Have complementarities, collaboration and / or synergies fostered by UNDAF contributed to greater sustainability of results of Country Programmes and projects of individual UN agencies?

**4. Management and Conduct of the Evaluation**

A **national consultant** will carry out the UNDAF evaluation and prepare a report. The UN agencies, UNDAF theme groups, thematic cross-cutting groups and relevant national counterparts, will provide necessary support required by the consultant to carry out planned activities and prepare the final report.

The **UNDAF task force** will perform the role of the UNDAF Evaluation Management Group. The management group will be expected to fulfil the following tasks: i) preparing the terms of reference for the UNDAF Evaluation; ii) provision the evaluation consultant with relevant information and documentation; iii) facilitating the access of the evaluation consultant to key informants during the data collection phase; iv) discussing the reports produced by the evaluation consultant; v) advising on the quality of the work done by the evaluation consultant; vi) assisting in incorporation of the findings, conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation into future programme design and implementation.

The UNDAF evaluation process will consist of 4 phases

**Phase 1 – Inception**

1. Collection of reference material: the UNDAF task force with support of the RC Office will compile a list of most important background material, documents, and reports relevant to the UNDAF evaluation.
2. Desk review of reference material: consultant will review the reference documents, reports and any other data and information to improve the evaluator’s understanding of the programme portfolios, types of stakeholders involved, and the operational environment in the country; and assess the availability of evaluative evidence
3. Development of evaluation strategy and design: prior to the main data collection phase, the RC Office will provide to consultant necessary reference materials to: i) improve the his/her understanding of the programme portfolios under evaluation, types of stakeholders involved, and the operational environment in the country; ii) assess the availability of evaluative evidence; iii) develop an operational plan, which will include a design matrix, data collection and analysis methods, list of potential national partners for bilateral interviews; iv) further identify and collect reference material. The evaluation plan will be shared with the UNRC and UNCT for approval.

**Phase 2 – Data collection**

1. Data collection: the consultant will conduct data collection activities. S/He will conduct agreed-upon interviews and/or focus group discussions with key national partners, representatives and selected senior staff of UN agencies and the coordinating body. The UNDAF evaluation will include sessions with the UN theme groups to analyze comparative advantages, including Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, with possible inclusion of partners. At the end of the data collection phase, the consultant will provide a debriefing presentation to the UN Country Team on preliminary results of the evaluation, with a view to validating preliminary findings and testing tentative conclusions and/or recommendations.

**Phase 3 – Reporting/desk review**

1. Data analysis and reporting: the consultant will conduct further data analysis based on all information collected, and prepare a draft evaluation report. The report will be submitted to the UNCT.
2. Review of the draft report and finalization of the report: the draft UNDAF evaluation report will be submitted for factual correction and feedback to key stakeholders. The consultant in consultation with the UNCT will prepare audit trail to indicate how the comments were taken into account, and finalize the UNDAF evaluation report.
3. Presentation of the report: a stakeholder workshop will be organized to present the UNDAF evaluation results and discuss ways forward.

**Phase 4 – Follow-up**

1. A management response to the recommendations of the UNDAF Evaluation will be prepared by the UN Country Team, to ensure the recommendations are taken into adequate consideration.

**5. Required skills and experience**

**Education**

* Advanced degree in international relations, political science, international development, economic development, social science or a related subject.

**Experience**

* Minimum 10 years of work experience in programme evaluation with particular focus on developing countries
* Previous experience in conducting UNDAF evaluations is desirable
* Knowledge of country context is desirable
* Experience in M&E systems and joint programmes within the UN an advantage
* Knowledge of UN Reform

**Language Requirements**

* Fluency in written and spoken Armenian and English is essential.

**6. Contract duration and remuneration**

The evaluation is expected to take place during the period of April - May 2014 as a stand-alone exercise.

* **Duration**: 6 working weeks
* **Remuneration**: in two instalments: a) when the first draft evaluation report is prepared 50% will be paid; and b) the other 50% will be paid upon submission of the final report.
* A **detailed timeframe** will be developed by the consultant.

## Annex 3: Evaluation questions

| **Criteria/****Sub-criteria** | **Main Questions to be Addressed by the UNDAF** | **Data Sources** | **Data Collection Methods** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A.1 Relevance.  *relevance (design and focus)*** of the UNDAF, i.e. the quality of the formulation of results at different levels, i.e. the results chain. |
|  ***relevance (design and focus)*** | * To what extent is the current UNDAF designed as a results-oriented, coherent and focused framework?
* Is it likely that the planned Country Programmes and projects and programme strategies will lead to the expected UNDAF results?
* Are expected outcomes realistic given the UNDAF timeframe and resources?
* To what extent and in what ways have risks and assumptions been addressed in UNDAF design?
* Is the distribution of roles and responsibilities among the different UNDAF partners well defined, facilitated in the achievement of results and have the arrangements been respected in the course of implementation?
* Do the Country Programmes and the UNDAF respond to the challenges of national capacity development and do they promote ownership of programmes by the national partners?

 * Has the UNDAF results matrix been sufficiently flexible to adjust to evolving national policies and strategies e.g. Sustainable Development Strategy, during the current programme cycle?
* Were new issues and their causes as well as challenges that arose during the UNDAF cycle adequately addressed? (flexibility)
* To what extent have human rights principles and standards been reflected or promoted in the UNDAF and, as relevant, in the Country Programmes?
* To what extent and in what ways has a human rights approach been reflected as one possible method for integrating human rights concerns into the UNDAF?
* To what extent and in what ways are the concepts of gender equity and equalityand other cross-cutting issuesreflected in programming?
* Were specific goals and targets set?
* Was there effort to produce sex disaggregated data and indicators to assess progress in gender equity and equality?
* To what extent and how is special attention given to girls’ and women’s rights and empowerment?
 | UNDAF document, Country programmesMinistry of Foreign AffairesUN agenciesRC officeUNDAF documentUN agencies | desk reviewInterviewinterviewDesk reviewinterview |
| **A.2 Effectiveness** |
| ***progress towards agreed UNDAF outcomes*** | * What progress has been made towards the realization of UNDAF outcomes as a contribution to the achievement of MDGs and in terms of indicators as reflected in the UNDAF M&E Plan?
* To what extent and in what ways was special emphasis placed on strengthening of national capacities, building partnerships, promoting innovations and the realization of human rights and promoting gender equity and equality?
* Which are the main factors that contributed to the realization or non-realization of the outcomes? How were risks and assumptions addressed during the implementation of programmes and projects?
* To what extent and in what ways did UN support promote national execution of programmes and / or the use of national expertise and technologies?
 | UN agenciesNational counterparts, Un agenciesUN agencies and partnersUN and partners | InterviewInterviewInterviewInterview, group discussion |
| coordination and partnership framework | * To what extent and in what ways has UNDAF contributed to achieving better synergies among the programmes of UN agencies?
* Has the UNDAF enhanced joint programming by agencies and /or resulted in specific joint programmes? Were the strategies employed by agencies complementary and synergistic?
* Have agency supported programmes been mutually reinforcing in helping to achieve UNDAF outcomes? Has the effectiveness or programme support by individual agencies been enhanced as a result of joint programming?
* Did UNDAF promote effective partnerships and strategic alliances around the main UNDAF outcome areas (e.g. national partners, International Financial Institutions and other external support agencies)?
 | UN agencies and partners | Interview, group discussion |
| **A.3 Efficiency.  *efficiency of the UNDAF as a mechanism to minimize transaction costs***of UN support for the government and for the UN agencies |
|  | * To what extent and in what ways has UNDAF contributed to a reduction of transaction cost for the government and for each of the UN agencies?
* In what ways could transaction costs be further reduced?
* Were results achieved at reasonably low or lowest possible cost?
 | RC office, UN agencies | Interview, group discussion |
| **A.4 Sustainability.**  to what extent results achieved and strategies used by the supported Country Programmes and projects are ***sustainable*** (i) as a contribution to national development and (ii) in terms of the added value of UNDAF for cooperation among individual UN agencies**.** |
|  | * To what extent and in what ways have national capacities been enhanced in government, civil society and NGOs?
* Have complementarities, collaboration and / or synergies fostered by UNDAF contributed to greater sustainability of results of Country Programmes and projects of individual UN agencies?
 |  UN and partnersUN country team | Interview, group discussionInterview, group discussion |
| ***Impact*** | * To the extent possible, assess the contribution to UNDAF outcomes on the lives of the poor, i.e. determine whether there is any major change in UNDAF indicators that can reasonably be attributed to or be associated with UNDAF, notably in the realization of MDGs, National Development Goals and the national implementation of internationally agreed commitments and UN Conventions and Treaties.
 | National partners, document, evaluation reports | Desk review |
| **B. Assessing un systems’ comparative strengths** |
| ***comparative advantage***  | * To what extent and in what ways have the comparative advantages of the UN organizations been utilized in the national context (including universality, neutrality, voluntary and grant-nature of contributions, multilateralism, and the special mandates of UN agencies)?
 | National partners, UN agencies | Interview |

## Annex 4: List of Interviewees

|  |
| --- |
| UN Agencies |
| 1 | UN Resident Coordinator | Mr. Bradley BusettoResident Representative and  | bradley.busetto@one.un.org |
| 2 | United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) | Claire Medina, Deputy Resident Representative | claire.medina@undp.org |
| 3 | United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) | Ms. Manja Henriette AhrensRepresentative | hahrens@unicef.org |
| 4 | United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) | Arthur Ayvazov Planning Officer | a.ayvazov@unicef.org  |
| 5 | United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) | Dijana DuricDeputy Representative, a.i. | dduric@unicef.org |
| 6 | United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) | Mr. Garik HayrapetyanAssistant Representative | hayrapetyan@unfpa.org |
| 7 | International Labour Organization (ILO) | Ms. Nune Hovhannisyan National Coordinator | hovhannisyan@ilo.org |
| 8 | International Organization for Migration (IOM)  | Ms. Ilona Ter-MinasianHead of Office | iterminasyan@iom.int |
| 9 | World Health Organisation (WHO) | Mr. Tatul HakobyanHead of Office | tah@euro.who.int |
| 10 | World Health Organisation (WHO | Tigran AvagyanProject Coordinator |  |
| 11 | Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) | Ms. Gayane NasoyanAssistant Representative | fao-am@fao.org |
| 12 | Office for the Coordination of the Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) | Mr. Ashot Sargsyan, National Advisor on Disaster Response | ashot.sargsyan@undp.org  |
| 13 | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) | Mr. Christoph Bierwirth Representative | bierwirc@unhcr.org |
| 14 | United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) | Ms. Anahit Simonyan, Head of Operations  | a.simonyan@unido.org |
| 15 | World Food Programme (WFP) | Ms. Liana KharatianOfficer-in-Charge | liana.kharatian@wfp.org |
| 161718 | RC Office |  Anoush AvanesyanJakob SchemelVarya Meruzhanyan | anoush.avanesyan@undp.orgjakob.schemel@one.un.orgvarya.meruzhanyan@one.un.org |
| Other UN-related |
| 19 | Thematic Group: Democratic Governance  | Ms. Claire Medina | claire.medina@undp.org  |
| 20 | Thematic Group: Economic Governance  | Ms. Anahit Simonyan | a.simonyan@unido.org  |
| 21 | Thematic Group: Social Services | Ms. Henriette Ahrens | hahrens@unicef.org |
| 22 | Thematic Group: Environmental Sustainability/DRM | Mr. Armen Martirosyan | armen.martirosyan@undp.org  |
| 23 | Cross-Cutting Theme Groups: UN Theme Group on Gender | Mr. Garik Hayrapetyan | hayrapetyan@unfpa.org  |
| 24 | Cross-Cutting Theme Groups: UN Disaster Management Team | Mr. Ashot Sargsyan | Ashot.sargsyan@undp.org  |
| 25 | Operations Management Team | Mr. Artashes Darbinyan | Artashes.darbinyan@undp.org  |
| International Development Partners |
| 26 | World Bank Armenia | Mr. Jean-Michel Happi, Country Manager for Armenia | jhappi@worldbank.org  |
| 27 | World Bank Armenia | Mr. Alexan HovhannisyanEconomist |  |
| 28 | USAID Armenia | Ms. Bella MargaryanProgramme Specialist- DG |  |
| 29 | GIZ | Ms. Dagmar Bott, DirectorMr. Thomas Eberherr, Team Leader | dagmar.bott@giz.de thomas.eberherr@giz.de  |
| 30 | EU | Mr. Alessandro ZanottaAdviser – macroeconomic development | traian.hristea@eeas.europa.eu hoa-binh.adjemian@eeas.europa.eu  |
| Government Stakeholders |
| 31 | Ministry of Foreign Affairs | Mr. Vahram Kajoyan, Head of International Organizations Department | ahovakimyan@mfa.am Tel: (060) 62 04 08 intorghr@mfa.amTel: (060) 62 05 02  |
| 32 | Ministry of Economy | Mr. Artak Bagdasaryan, Head of department- Economic Development Policy | Tel: (010) 59 71 15abagdasaryan@mineconomy.am |
| 33 | Ministry of Labour and Social Issues | Mrs. Anahit Martirosyan, Head of department –International cooperation | Tel: (010) 56 53 65 |
| 34 | Ministry of Territorial Administration | Mrs. Lilit SaroyanHead of department –International cooperation | Tel: (010) 51 13 24 |
| 35 | Ministry of Health | Mr. Sergey KhachatryanDeputy Minister | Tel: (010) 52 69 87skhachatryan@moh.am  |
| 36 | Ministry of Health | Head of department –International cooperation |  |
| 37 | Ministry of Education | Mr. Robert Stepanyan, Head of Development Programs and Monitoring Department  | Tel: (010) 52 73 43  |
| 38 | Ministry of Nature Protection | Mr. Ashot Harutyunyan, Head of DepartmentMr. Simon Papyan, First Deputy Minister  | Tel: (010) 58 53 31khachik.hakobyan@mnp.am Tel: (010) 54 08 61papyan@mnp.am  |
| 39 | Ministry of Agriculture | Mr. Armen Harutyunyan, Deputy Minister | Tel: (010) 52 48 34  |
| 40 | National Statistical Service  | Mr. Stepan Mnatsakanyan, President | Tel: (010) 52 42 13info@armstat.am  |
| 41 | National Statistical Service | Mrs Anahit SafyanHead of Department – International relations and cooperation |  |
| 42 | Ministry of Energy and natural Resources | Ms Tigran Melqonyan. Head of External relations and cooperation |  |
| 43 | SME Development National Center (SME DNC) | Mr. Anush Aslanyan , Deputy Director | Tel: (010) 54 16 45 |
| Civil Society |
| 44 | International Center for Human Development | Mr. Vahan AsatryanMr. Armen GalustyanMr. Ashot Khurshudyan | akhurshudyan@ichd.org; asatryan.vahan@gmail.comagalstyan@ichd.org  |
| 45 | Step-by-Step NGO | Ms. Ruzanna Tsarukyan, President | Tel: (091) 42 61 79ruzanna@sbsbf.am  |
| 46 | Association of Women with University Education  | Ms. Jemma Hasratyan, President | Tel: (099) 41 99 41 jemma.hasratyan@gmail.com |
| 47 | Bridge of Hope | Ms. Susanna Tadevosyan, President | Tel: (091) 40 52 19bridge@arminco.com  |
| 48 | OXFAM in Armenia | Mrs Margarita HakobyanCountry Director |  |
| Other Partners |
| 49 | Ombudsman Office | Mrs. Anna VoskanyanAdviser on External relation | ombuds@ombuds.amTel: (010) 53 76 51; 53 88 42 |
| 50 | Network for Child Protection | Ms. Mira Antonyan | Tel: (093) 32 79 21mira\_antonyan@yahoo.com  |

1. National Accounts of Armenia, statistical handbook, Yerevan 2013, p. 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. National Accounts of Armenia, statistical handbook, Yerevan 2013, p. 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Consumption inequality measured by the Gini coefficient increased from 0.242 in 2008 to 0.269 in 2012. Gross income inequality, in turn, increased from 0.339 in 2008 to 0.372 in 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The poverty gap is the average, over all people, of the gaps between poor people’s living standards and the poverty line. It indicates the average extent to which individuals fall below the poverty line. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Social Snapshot and poverty, NSS RA, Yerevan, 2013, p. 30, 33 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Social Snapshot and poverty, NSS RA, Yerevan, 2013, p. 36 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Government Program, Republic of Armenia, Yerevan 2008, available at <http://www.gov.am/files/docs/77.pdf>, accessed 27.05.2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. This is a process in which the UN System's development programme responds to national policies and

priorities, which in turn reflect the MDGs to which member states are committed and which are the

mandate of the UN System [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. This Report follows first and foremost the methodology developed by UNEG. See: *Norms for Evaluation in the UN System.* 2004, UN, UNDAF *Evaluation Guidelines.* July 2005, UNEG, *Study of the Evaluability of the UN Development Assistance, Framework*. 2006*and also* UNEG*, Evaluation in the UN system. April 2007*. As a supplementary source it also makes use of the following publications UNDP/EO, *Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results*. New York, 2003,and *Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators.* New York 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Annex C lists the documents reviewed. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. “It is highly unlikely that any evaluation would be able to identify a contribution, linking UNDAF to the national goal level indicators.” See: UNEG, *Evaluability of the UN Development Assistance Framework*. p.20. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. See: UNDP, *Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating Results, p*. 101 and p. 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The Terms of Reference are given in Annex 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Duration is 6 years as it was envisaged to harmonize it with MDGs and initially approved PRSP I (2003-2015) and MDGs. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. PRSP I (2003-2015) is the most comprehensive document, which was prepared with inputs from various sectors and is the only document that reflects government priorities. Pages 128-138 list the main directions of PRSP and implementation policies. See*: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.* Yerevan, 2003 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Government Anti-Crisis Action Plan, progress and status, available at <http://www.gov.am/files/docs/475.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Millennium Development Goals (Armenia 2005) can be obtained from: www.UNDP.am-MDG [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. See: Republic of Armenia, *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*. Yerevan 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. PRSP, MDG, UNDAF. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. RA Government’s anti-crisis action , progress and status , summary report, p. 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. A questionnaire was designed and distributed to all Agencies requesting pertinent information about the projects in implementation. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. The Law on Domestic Violence is not adopted at the time of the evaluation. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. DG theme group inputs report to RC [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Methodology for measuring development progress has been developed and presented during the RIO+20 World Summit jointly by the government of Armenia. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. For example, improvement of Environmental Monitoring System under the three Global Environmental conventions National environmental legislation has passed legal expert examination, and the packages of 21 draft legal acts and 15 bylaws are submitted for Government adoption, source. WG Report for ROAR [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The first value is the target value for 2015, and the second one (in brackets) is the projected value for 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)